

## **KANSAS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE EMPLOYEE TUITION ASSISTANCE**

### **Agency Professional Development Policies**

The Kansas Department of Agriculture has instituted a policy for tuition assistance.

This program does not replace programs' funding of conferences, seminars or similar training opportunities for their employees. Programs will send employees to these learning opportunities at the direction of supervisors and as funds are available.

### **KDA will:**

- Inform all KDA employees of the availability of tuition assistance in advance of the semester in which funds are available. The policy will be implemented at the agency level according to available funds and budgetary constraints by fiscal year.
- All full-time employees are eligible for tuition assistance. Tuition assistance will be provided in the maximum amount of \$1,500 per employee per fiscal year for courses successfully completed.
- Classes or courses must be related to the individual's job duties. Preference will be given to courses specifically related to the duties and responsibilities of an employee's position. However, consideration will be given to courses an employee can justify as necessary to being promoted to a job on a different career ladder within the agency.
- If funds are available, tuition assistance toward a degree related to an employee's current position may be granted. Books, fees and other associated costs will remain the responsibility of the employee.
- Available tuition assistance funds are to be pooled among programs to ensure parity among deserving employees who may be from a smaller program with no available funds for this purpose.
- If possible, students approved for tuition assistance will be allowed flexible time to attend class. Employees are required to work 40 hours; class and study time are on their own time.

### **The employee will:**

- Be a full-time employee with at least one year of service with the agency.
- Have earned a ranking of satisfactory or better on the most recent evaluation.
- Write a statement explaining how the course(s) for which the employee is seeking tuition assistance falls within the scope of agency operations or reasonably contribute to KDA's mission.
- Agree to sign a memorandum of understanding with the agency spelling out terms of the tuition agreement. This includes repayment if the employee does not stay with the agency for two years after conclusion of the educational program.
- Retain employment with the agency during the time tuition assistance is provided and for at least two years after the final day of the semester in which the employee last receives tuition assistance from the agency. If the employee leaves after one year but before the two years of service, he or she will be required to reimburse 50 percent of the tuition assistance provided by the agency. If the employee leaves before the

one-year time period, he or she will be required to reimburse 100 percent of the tuition assistance provided by the agency.

- To receive reimbursement, the employee must provide written documentation to the personnel director within 30 days of the course end date showing successful completion of the course and an earned grade of B or higher. Courses taken on a pass/fail option are not eligible for the program.
- Employees will be required to make tuition assistance repayment arrangements with the fiscal office if the employee receives a C or lower; or if the employee does not complete the class. Payback arrangements will not exceed a one-year period and future consideration for tuition reimbursement will not be allowed until KDA is paid in full.
- If an employee does not repay, or fails to make arrangements within 30 days of a failed or dropped class, KDA will notify the employee that the debt will be sent to the State of Kansas Division of Accounts and Reports setoff program for collection. If an employee terminates his or her employment and owes KDA money but makes no attempt to pay according to prior arrangements, the debt will be sent to the setoff program for collection.